

## **IPID 'Academia meets Practice' - Sida 21<sup>st</sup> of January 2008**

IPID (the International Network for Postgraduate Students in ICT4D) arranged a new activity within the theme 'Academia meets Practice' on the 21<sup>st</sup> of January, 2008. The activity was carried out in the framework of a series of events which make it possible for postgraduates to meet, listen to and discuss ICT4D with practitioners who have wide experience from the 'real' world.

IPID arranged a one-day visit to Sida (the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) on the 21st January 2008 in conjunction with the launch of the ICT4D helpdesk activities at Sida. Some twenty IPID members participated in the event from 11 different universities including the International Centre for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, Italy and Joensuu University in Finland.

In the afternoon IPID members were invited to the ICT Secretariat at Sida. The staff at the ICT Secretariat presented their activities as well as the process for funding of ICT4D projects. A representative of SAREK informed the participants about Swedish Development Research.

See below for more information about the event or the following links:

[http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=1389&a=35995&language=en\\_US](http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=1389&a=35995&language=en_US)

[http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=1389&a=25716&language=en\\_US](http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=1389&a=25716&language=en_US)

<http://www.spidercenter.org/>

### **Seminar on the Sida ICT for Development helpdesk**

On 21 January, a well-attended seminar was held at Sida. About 80 people sat in the Auditorium to learn more about the Sida ICT4D Helpdesk. The primary purpose of the seminar was to inform Sida personnel about how easy it is to use the Sida helpdesk for ICT4D (Information and Communication Technology for Development) and what it can be used for.

The seminar was arranged by SPIDER (the Swedish Program for Information and Communication Technology in Developing Regions), which presented itself and its large contact network. Attendees heard examples from those who already engaged in projects for Sida through the helpdesk, such as at Örebro University, where Åke Grönlund described the cooperation with SPIDER and Sida in Rwanda and Bangladesh.

The helpdesk is a prepaid service that's easy to use. Karoline Beronius at SPIDER clearly demonstrated just how easy. Phone one of the numbers on the annexed fact sheet, or e-mail to [info@spidercenter.org](mailto:info@spidercenter.org), and ask your question. Naturally, Sida has the ICT Secretariat at INEC, where you can contact Per-Einar Tröften.

This seminar also provided an opportunity to hear the new Chairman of SPIDER, Bo Göransson. After the seminar, Bo Göransson discussed his goals and visions for ICT work. Why is he so involved in this?

"Well, it's important to increase the emphasis of ICT in development cooperation, as it's so easy, and can have such great effects. We must begin thinking ICT when we handle all sorts of projects. How can ICT technology help us to reach our goals here, in this highway, democracy or anti-corruption project? In the past, when we talked about IT," he adds, "we thought of the rapid processing of large collections of information. Today, we think more about closeness, openness and power."

"The long-term goal," according to Bo Göransson, "is to increase ICT-thinking in cooperation with Sida, so it will be easy for us to use functioning ICT models in other places, and in other contexts. We should not see this as an add-on, but more as an instrument among other instruments, and take advantage of it.

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### **Welcome to the ICT4D helpdesk for Sida, Swedish Embassies & other Swedish Authorities.**

SPIDER ([www.spidercenter.org](http://www.spidercenter.org)), the Swedish Program for Information and Communication Technologies in Developing Regions, is a national resource center financed primarily by Sida and hosted by the Royal Institute of Technology, KTH, Stockholm, with the main objective to assist developing countries with promotion and deployment of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) for poverty alleviation. We work in close collaboration with the ICT Secretariat at Sida.

**SPIDER is also a help desk** in the area of ICT for Sida, Swedish Embassies and other Swedish authorities. Our special strength lie in our vast network of ICT experts from all sectors of society; academia, the public and private sectors as well as civil society, to deliver the best ICT4D (Information and Communication Technologies for Development) services.

For small assignments such as making ICT surveys/studies maybe in conjunction with development of new country strategies, assessing ICT4D applications/requests, providing advice on implementation of ICT related projects, we already have funds available from Sida. Therefore you do not need to be concerned with complicated bureaucratic procedures of entering into agreement with us or thinking about which budget head should pay for such an assignment. The only action you have to take is to contact us and tell us how we can help you and we will do our best to assist. If possible we will provide you with on-the-spot advice or assistance, alternatively we will find the best resource in our network to assist you.

**The following are examples of services we can provide:**

**1. Advise, information and studies on ICT4D in relation to:**

- the country strategy process
- the project/program preparation process
- the development of policies and guidelines

**2. Reviews and comments on**

- documents submitted to the Sida Project Committee
- project/ program application proposals
- evaluations and other documents (e.g. reports and background texts)

**3. Provide resource persons/organization and/or organize and coordinate:**

- workshops
- conferences
- lectures
- training

**4. Implement ICT component in Sida projects:**

- assist in incorporating ICT in existing projects
- assist in developing ICT component in new projects

**5. Send Junior ICT expert to support Sida/Embassy projects on the ground**

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For further information: <http://www.spidercenter.org/>

**Swedish Development Research**

Presentation held by Michelle Bouchard, Sida/SAREC's Council for Development Research

Background:

- Started in early 1990's at SAREC
- Presently approx 130 MSEK / year
- 290 projects funded (2007)
- Average 3 years support given (amount varies)

Goals:

- Promote research relevant to developing countries
- Stimulate interest of Swedish researchers in developing countries and their problems
- Stimulate research contact between Sweden and developing countries
- Promote the recruitment of younger Swedish researchers into this area of research

Scientific areas:

- Humanities and Education
- Health
- Natural Resources and the Environment
- Social Sciences
- Science and Technology

Applications:

- Generally opens mid-February, closes in early April
- PhDs (project leader) from a Swedish university or institute can apply
- Research can be conducted in DAC listed countries (see [www.sida.se/uforsk](http://www.sida.se/uforsk) for link to DAC list)
- Sarec's Scientific Reference Groups and Sida's Research Board decides on who gets funding See <http://www.sida.se/sida/jsp/sida.jsp?d=678>
- Email: [uforsk@sida.se](mailto:uforsk@sida.se)

**Swedish Research Partnership Links Program**

- Approx 36 MSEK / year
- Max 250.000 SEK / year / project (up to 3 years)
- Funds cover extra costs involved in meeting and working with researchers from developing country
- To promote long term research cooperation between researchers from Sweden and the developing world.
- More information available from [www.VR.se](http://www.VR.se)